

Utah / West

Notch Peak

DISTANCE: ca 7 miles

ELEVATION GAIN: 2800 feet (bis 9600)

ROUTE TYPE: Out & Back

Notch Peak is a summit in the Western Desert House Range with a vertical cliff on one side over 2,000 feet. The entire rise of cliffs and benches are almost 4,450 feet from the valley bottom making this the highest cliffs in North America. Add to that a hike in via a gorge that feels like you are in a National Park in southern Utah. Include ancient bristlecone pines near the summit and a natural arch on the way in and you'll have a great experience the Notch Peak Wilderness Study Area. Let's not forget the views west into Nevada and Great Basin National Park, the Bonneville Salt Flats, Mt. Nebo far to the northeast and everything in-between.

Start hiking up the old road behind the signs for 0.5 miles until you see the road (and canyon) split. Take the left road which soon disappears and you are hiking a dry wash. Most of the time, there is a trail in the wash, just keep going up the canyon if you miss it, you'll come across it again. Soon you'll think you are in southwest Utah canyon country.

Somewhere between mile 2 and 3 an arch is visible 80 feet above you in the rock. The wash goes around 3 sides of it so keep your eye out. At around 3.5 miles the wash hits some steep ledges where a humongous old tree has fallen across the drainage. Either scramble up the ledges or find a climbers trail to the right that works up below a cliff band to get around the wash scramble. Once above the ledges, the wash opens up, no longer "canyon like" but you're still in a ravine.

Soon the wash turns northward, you should easily sense this. Keep an eye out for the wash to split. Cairns and a faint trail should force you left where you climb 3 minutes to small bench where the summit is now in view. (The true summit will be the ridge to the left of the peak that looks like the real summit). Several faint trails exist from here to the summit. Work up to the left side of the "false summit" on a trail to a saddle between the false summit and the "ridge" which is the actual summit. The way up from the saddle is a bit steeper but a trail has formed most of the way. The summit cairn opens up like a box where the register is placed inside.

From Delta, take Highway 6 west 40 miles. Turn right at mileage marker 46 on to the unpaved Notch Peak Loop Road Drive 4 miles north, turning left on the signed Miller Canyon Road. Drive another 5 miles to BLM Picnic area with restrooms. This is a 4 way intersection. Turn left going SW toward Sawtooth Canyon. A few miles later you will pass a cabin on the right and another mile later the road ends at the trailhead. Signs will indicate wilderness sturdy area. Just before the trailhead, a old road cuts left, down then steeply uphill...don't go that way.

